

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated December 5, 2007, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

By this Response, claims 10 and 21 have previously been cancelled, and claims 2, 6, 12 and 17 are currently cancelled. Claims 1, 7, 11 and 18 are amended. No new matter is added.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 11, 13-16 and 18-20 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-9 and 11-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,739,880 to Suzuki et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,850,308 to Fujioka et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,759,172 to Huh et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,481,388 to Aoya.

The rejection of claims 1-9 and 11-20 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claim 1 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 1 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “thickness(t) of the over-coat layer is $3\mu\text{m} < t < 5\mu\text{m}$, said thickness on the first substrate absorbing an external force to prevent the compression or depression of the black matrix and the glass ball or glass fiber having a diameter of about $\pm 1\mu\text{m}$ compared to the cell gap between the first and second substrates” and “the black matrix is extended to an end portion of the first substrate so that the side surface of black matrix is exposed to the outside of the attached first and second substrates.” None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least these features of the claimed invention.

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that Hus teaches “the thickness of the overcoating film (5) is not limited, but it is preferably 1.0 to 3.0 μm , that would be a range overlap the range $1.2\mu\text{m} < t < 2\mu\text{m}$ and $2\mu\text{m} < t < 5\mu\text{m}$.” However, the thickness (t) of the overcoat layer of the claimed invention is $3\mu\text{m} < t < 5\mu\text{m}$. Thus, Hus fails to teach or suggest at least “thickness(t) of the over-coat layer is $3\mu\text{m} < t < 5\mu\text{m}$, said thickness on the first substrate absorbing an external force to prevent the compression or depression of the black matrix.”

Further, in the claimed invention the size of a glass ball or a glass fiber used as the support member is limited to the particular size. That is, in the claimed invention, the glass ball or glass fiber has a diameter of about $\pm 1 \mu\text{m}$ compared to the cell gap between the first and second substrates. However, this technical feature is not shown in the cited references.

In addition, in the claimed invention the black matrix is extended to the end portion of the first substrate. However, this technical feature is not shown in the cited references. In Office Action, the examiner stated “Suzuki teaches (Figs. 5a-5c) that the black matrix (BM) is extended at least from the seal pattern (SL) formed region to one end portion of the portion of the first substrate (SB2).” However, the black matrix of Suzuki is merely extended to the one portion within the seal pattern (SL), not to the end portion. Thus, in Suzuki the black matrix is not exposed to the outside of the liquid crystal panel. On the contrary, in the claimed invention the black matrix is extended to the end portion of the substrate so that the black matrix is exposed to the outside. Thus, Suzuki fails to teach or suggest at least “the black matrix is extended to end portion of the first substrate so that the side surface of black matrix is exposed to the outside of the attached first and second substrates.”

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 and claims 3-5 and 7-9, which depend therefrom, are allowable over the cited references.

Claim 11 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 1 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “thickness(t) of the over-coat layer is $3\mu\text{m} < t < 5\mu\text{m}$, said thickness on the first substrate absorbing an external force to prevent the compression or depression of the black matrix and the glass ball or glass fiber having a diameter of about $\pm 1 \mu\text{m}$ compared to the cell gap between the first and second substrates” and “the black matrix is extended to an end portion of the first substrate so that the side surface of black matrix is exposed to the outside of the attached first and second substrates.” None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least these features of the claimed invention.

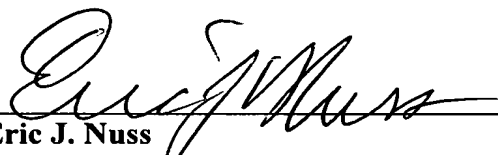
In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 11 for the same reasons as claim 1. Applicants’ arguments with respect to claim 11 are equally applicable to claims 1, and Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 and claims 13-16 and 18-20, which depend therefrom, are allowable over the cited references.

Accordingly, Applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
Eric J. Nuss
Registration No.: **40,106**
McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP
1900 K. St. NW
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: 202.496.7500
Attorney for Applicants